been ' Dinkie ' now for about three months, and latterly will not answer to any other name. She curls up in a chair pretending to sleep, crawls on all fours, and comes to me to be stroked. The ' last straw ' came this morning when she sat on the hearthrug licking her knees and said, ' Look at Dinkie cleaning himself/ I, by the way, have been named ' Tim', who is another cat we see sometimes ! I used to welcome the real Dinkie's visits, showing her how to stroke him and treat him kindly. Latterly, however, I have been colder towards him, remarking that I ' don't care for cats about the house', but this had no effect on the obsession. Do you think this is being carried to excess, and if so what can I do to alter things, please ? She is very good at amusing herself with her tea-set, building bricks, etc., but I notice that it is always the same idea—' Dinkie is going to give Tim a cup of tea/ ' See what a nice house Dinkie has made/ Till I almost wish I'd never heard the name. She gets annoyed at being called anything else, too/[11]

Nearly two years later the mother wrote again as follows :

" After I had written to you, my little girl got definitely worse—she was just three years old then—she left off playing with her toys, etc., and* would spend quite a lot of time curled up in a chair or on the floor, and even took to' licking her paws and washing her face with them'. But the cat itself cured her—it scratched her one day and she ceased to be Dinkie any more. She had this phantasy for about three months, gradually adding to it day by day. I often wonder now how far it would have gone had the real Dinkie been more complacent! After that nothing happened for about two months, when an imaginary person called ' Bis-

seker' (origin unknown) appeared. He used to run beside the pram and was variously a man, a little boy or a little girl. We still have him with us and a whole history has been evolved about him. He is now definitely a boy, age thirteen, and has a sister and a crowd of friends. But for nearly a year now Eleanor has said that 'of course he is only pretend'. When we go on holidays he sometimes doesn't come for a day or so, then she will remark ' Bisseker is coming to-day—he

[1] My reply to the mother was to advise her to observe the child quietly, and if within the next year or so the child showed no greater power of tolerating real life, on the one hand, and no greater mobility of phantasy on the other, she should seek expert psychological help.